

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A drug nanoparticle ~~obtained by~~ produced by a process comprising irradiating a solid target with a laser beam under a pressure of 1 to 1000 Pa, [[to a]] wherein the solid target ~~composed of~~ comprises drug powder so as to release which upon irradiation releases the drug [[as]] nanoparticles from the solid target, wherein said drug nanoparticles have an average diameter of 100 nm or less.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The drug nanoparticles according to Claim 1, wherein said drug ~~is composed of~~ comprises an organic compound.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): A drug-protein nanocomposite ~~obtained by~~ produced by a process comprising irradiating a solid target with a laser beam under a pressure of 1 to 1000 Pa, [[to a]] wherein the solid target ~~composed of~~ comprises a mixture of drug powder and protein so as to release which upon irradiation releases the drug and the protein [[as]] nanocomposites from the solid target, wherein each of drug nanoparticles and protein nanoparticles constituting the nanocomposites have an average diameter of 100 nm or less.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The drug-protein nanocomposite according to Claim 3, wherein said drug ~~is composed of~~ comprises an organic compound.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A method of manufacturing a medical agent, comprising the steps of:

irradiating a solid target with a laser beam ~~to a solid target composed of drug components~~ under an inert gas atmosphere of reduced pressure of 1 to 1000 Pa, said solid target comprising drug components, and breaking intermolecular bonds of said drug components ~~thereby to release~~ which upon breaking releases said drug as nanoparticles; generating nanoparticles having an average diameter of 100 nm or less; and depositing said nanoparticles onto a surface of excipient particles.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A method of manufacturing a medical agent, comprising the steps of:

irradiating a solid target with a laser beam ~~to a solid target composed of drug components and protein~~ under a reduced pressure of inert gas atmosphere having a pressure of 1 to 1000 Pa, said solid target comprising drug components and protein, and breaking intermolecular bonds between said drug components and said protein ~~thereby to release~~ which upon breaking releases said drug and said protein as nanocomposites;

generating nanoparticles of the drug and the protein each having an average diameter of 100 nm or less; and

depositing said nanoparticles as nanocomposites onto a surface of excipient particles.

Claim 7 (Canceled).

Claim 8 (Original): The method of manufacturing a medical agent according to Claim 5, wherein said solid target is prepared by pressing the drug powder and simultaneously heating the drug powder to a temperature lower than a melting point of the drug powder.

Claim 9 (Original): The method of manufacturing a medical agent according to Claim 5, wherein said solid target is prepared by a method comprising the steps of:
pressing the drug powder and simultaneously heating the drug powder to a temperature immediately below the melting point of the drug powder so as to melt a part of said drug powder; and
rapidly cooling and solidifying the molten drug thereby to prepare the solid target.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A medical agent manufacturing apparatus comprising:

a solid target ~~composed of~~ comprising drug powder;

a laser generating equipment for irradiating a solid target with a laser beam ~~to said solid target~~ under a pressure of 1 to 1000 Pa so that intermolecular bonds of drug components are broken and the drug components are released from said target;

a drug container for generating nanoparticles, having an average diameter of 100 nm or less, from said released drug components and for depositing said nanoparticles onto a surface of excipient particles; [[and]]

a vacuum chamber for accommodating the solid target and said drug container; and

a vibrating device for intermittently applying vibration to said excipient particles to which said nanoparticles generated from said solid target are deposited, so that said nanoparticles deposited to said excipient particles are fluidized.

Claim 11 (Canceled).

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The medical agent manufacturing apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein said solid target ~~contains~~ comprises protein.